

TEXAS CALLING

Texas Payphone Association

November 1994

Devastating October Flooding Affects Payphone Companies in Southeast Texas

After days of rain in mid-October, the San Jacinto River went over its banks and began flooding roads, houses, fields, and everything in the path of the raging waters. People had to flee from the rising water just to save their lives.

Residents near the little town of New Caney were especially hard hit. Many of them managed to leave their flooded farms and homes and make it to the Kuntry Kwik store, the location of the only payphone within an area of about 15 miles. To their surprise, flood victims found they could make local phone calls for free at the payphone owned by Payphone Management Company of Houston.

"Through our regular computer monitoring, we knew that during the height of the flood the coin box was filling up—but our technicians could not get there because all the roads were closed," said Lil Nelms of Payphone Management. They knew that once the coin box got full, people would no longer be able to make calls. "We decided to reprogram the phone so local calls would be free and people could continue to reach the outside world."

Nelms said their payphones throughout the low lying areas are all line powered phones, and Centel kept the telephone lines going even though there was water everywhere.

As the area was drenched with more than two feet of rain, the flooding devastation expanded until 26 counties were declared federal disaster areas. These regional floods were declared the worst ever recorded.

Roads throughout southeast Texas flooded and many cars drowned out and stopped running. Near The Woodlands people abandoned their stalled cars and waded through more than a foot of water to reach a payphone at a Shell station owned by Lee McMurtry of LEEMAC, Inc. of Spring. Callers used the phone to contact wrecker companies, their families, and their offices.


"I had quite a few payphones that were the only phones around close to the flooded area," said McMurtry. "Some of my phones had water up to the enclosure so the electrical part in the base was under water, but I didn't lose any phones. I guess we've been doing a good job of installing the phones and taking care of the electrical systems."

McMurtry also had a phone at a Shell station on the Gulf Freeway in Houston which was a life line for drivers. People were on their way to work in →



Photo by F. Carter Smith

A couple wades out of their flooded home near Sims Bayou in Houston to meet a waiting rescue boat.



Houston when they encountered flooding on the Gulf Freeway near Hobby Airport, so they had to turn around and go back home. But because it had then flooded in the NASA, Friendswood, and Clear Lake City areas, the drivers couldn't get back home. "They all pulled off the road and filled up the parking lot near the Shell station, and they stood in line to use my payphone. Everyone was pretty orderly and just took about 15 seconds on the phone," he added. The callers deposited in the payphone \$47 in coins on that one day. Some of McMurtry's phones tripled or quadrupled their normal coin revenue, and one phone had 10 times the typical number of coins deposited.

Dick Hastings of Amtel Communications, Inc. said they encountered just the opposite situation. "In a lot of our locations, usage was down because it rained for four days and people didn't want to stand out in the rain and use the payphone."

He said Amtel did not have any phones under water. "Our phones are normally in shopping centers, and their drainage seemed to be better than in other areas," Hastings said. Amtel did lose dial tone at a few payphones because Southwestern Bell lost some cables, but once Bell fixed their problems all Amtel's phones came right back up.

"We have one payphone in a fancy subdivision on the San Jacinto River, River Plantation, and a lot of the houses had water up to their ceilings," said Ernestine Daniel of Tel-Del Service in Conroe. "We just knew our payphone by the golf course would be covered with water, but it stayed high and dry." She said there was no way to check the phone without a boat, but they could tell by the coin and long distance revenue the residents depended on that payphone to get help. "We have a button on the phone to push if it needs repairs, and lots of people pushed that button to see if we could get the phones in their homes repaired."

James Sollock of Pay Phones, Ltd. in Pasadena provided a friendly voice over the payphone to help a stranded motorist. "A man had driven clear from Louisiana, and he was trying to meet his brother-in-law in League City so they could fly to Las Vegas the next day. He had gotten to IH 10 and Highway 146, but he could not get any further

due to the flooding. He called 211 on my phone and we just started talking." Because Sollock lives in Pasadena and is familiar with all the roads, he was able to suggest a variety of alternative routes for driving. "I would say, you might try heading north and going up through Mont Belvieu, or you could try this other route..."

Sollock learned once again that a payphone business is truly a *service* business, and he felt good knowing that both his payphone and its owner were there to help someone in need.

TPA Schedules Quarterly Meeting For Thursday, January 19 in Austin

Professional development workshops and the association's legislative program will be featured at TPA's next quarterly meeting on Thursday, January 19, 1995 in Austin.

The association hopes to attract a record-breaking attendance at the meeting which will be held at the new Austin Convention Center. The center is located at 500 East Cesar Chavez Street (First Street). Participants may be interested in spending one night in Austin to enjoy the Sixth Street Entertainment District which is only five blocks away and to schedule visits to legislative offices while in Austin.

Hotel reservations should be made as soon as possible. Rooms have been reserved at two hotels:

- Radisson Hotel on Town Lake (formerly The Crest), 111 Cesar Chavez St., ~~\$75~~ single or double occupancy. For reservations, call (800) 333-3333.
- La Quinta Inn, 300 East 11th Street, \$57 single occupancy, \$63 double occupancy. For reservations, call (512) 476-1166.

The Radisson is within three blocks of the convention center. La Quinta is 10 blocks away, and rides are available on the 'Dillo trolleys.

TPA is seeking companies who are interested in sponsoring the meeting by underwriting the costs of the luncheon and cocktail reception. For more information about sponsorship, contact Executive Director Alan C. Kaniss at (800) 666-9959.

Members also should contact Kaniss if they have suggestions for professional growth topics to be covered at the meeting.

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE APCC

MARCH 1996

PERSPECTIVES

ON PUBLIC GOVERNMENT AND POLICY

Good Friends

IPP Providers Give Back to Their Communities



Good Friends & Good Deeds

Just as a good friend is always there for you, IPP providers are good friends to the communities they serve. As you will see in the stories that follow, IPP providers are very generous with their time, talent and money when it comes to helping others.

CTI's Good Deeds Warm the Heart by Margo J. Hackel

The infamous Blizzard of '96 is over, and thanks to a bright idea from a New York City-based independent public payphone (IPP) provider, some people in the Big Apple stayed a little warmer during the storm and the rest of the winter.

Jack Greene, chief executive officer of Chronometric Telecommunications Inc. (CTI), made it possible for apartment dwellers to call an emergency heat complaint number from his payphones free of charge.

Not meant for complaints about the local utility company, the heat emergency hotline was set up by the city of New York several years ago to deal with complaints from people who were forced to live without heat in their apartments, presumably because an absentee landlord did not pay the electric bill. The number is listed in the New York phone book's Easy Reference List as "Heat Complaints" and in the Community Service Numbers section as "Housing, Central Complaint Bureau."

People who call the heat emergency number reach a human being, not a machine. The employee handles the complaint in whatever fashion necessary to restore heat to the building — from tracking down the landlord to arranging emergency fuel delivery.

"We reasoned that since payphones provide an essential access point for many apartment dwellers who don't have phones, then a payphone should provide free access to that crucial emergency number, just the way it does for 911 service or directory assistance," Greene said, explaining why CTI decided to offer the free access. "We're really just providing access. If you go to a phone and need to make an emergency call, we think [not having heat] is an emergency. We're not taking a legal position; we're trying to provide a benefit at a phone which is, after all, there anyway."

At press time, Greene had not yet had a chance to measure any significant results of the program, as it had only been in place a few weeks. He did say, however, that he planned to track the calls and evaluate the program. "Will we maintain it year round?

Will we 'unprogram' it for the summer? I guess that really depends on whether we have a competitive need for using

that programming parameter for another form of access."

Earning Candy Stripes

As the country's health care debate rages on, many medical providers and hospitals are being squeezed in the vice grip of uncertain economics. As a result, hospitals are finding themselves understaffed and underequipped, particularly in the category of "nice-but-not-necessary" extras, such as telecommunications devices for the deaf (TDDs). While not required to perform medical miracles, TDDs certainly are useful in hospitals where there may be hearing impaired staff members, patients or visitors.

(Editor's note: The Americans with Disabilities Act [ADA] outlines requirements for TDDs at various locations, and this includes hospitals. However, many hospitals are interested in providing more than the required number of TDDs.)

With the help of Jack Greene and CTI, about 20 hospitals in the New York metropolitan area were able to install brand new TDDs over the past three years. CTI has donated more than 50 TDDs during that time, and the company plans to continue distributing the devices to its hospital customers. Greene says the donations were CTI's way of "showing cooperation between our company and other service providers."

He says his company is glad to put its buying power to use in benefiting others.

"IPPs are essential access providers throughout the nation with an obligation to those we serve," Greene explained. "The well-being of our host locations is crucial to the well-being of our own companies, and we cherish the cooperative relationships we have developed."



Employees at a New York hospital test a TDD donated by CTI.



Margo J. Hackel is a principal writer at Write Away, a Phoenix-based editorial services company specializing in high-tech and telecommunications business topics.

Rebecca Carter edited On The Line magazine for the California Payphone Association for five years. She is a freelancer based in Olympia, WA.

Illustrations by James Stringer

Boys & Girls Clubs: Winners all the Way Around

by Margo A. Hackett

When the Newport News, Va. branch of Boys & Girls Club needed a payphone for its new facility last year, Richard Thomas of Virginia Telecommunications was happy to oblige.

He offered to install and maintain the phone for free, mostly because some special people in his life had benefited greatly from their childhood involvement in the organization.

Thomas said three men who mean a lot to him — his brother-in-law, his daughter's employer and one of his very dear friends — were able to turn their lives around with the help of the local Boys & Girls Club. Because the organization had such an impact on his life, Thomas felt it was the least he could do to make a payphone available to them.

Club Director Tom Olaisen, who has been affiliated with the club for more than 30 years, was there when Thomas' brother-in-law was a

child. Thomas says Olaisen helped his brother-in-law mature into a model citizen. The model citizen is now a supervisor with the city's maintenance department.

Thomas doesn't mind that the phone he installed at the Boys & Girls Club doesn't bring in much revenue. "It's just a break-even phone," he says, noting that it really was installed in honor of the important men in his life who became successful thanks to the Boys & Girls Club. "I don't care if the phone's a loser, those three men are winners!"

Thomas has 30 phones of his own; he also maintains routes for other IPPs and runs other telecommunications business ventures.

Richard Thomas (left) is happy to support the efforts of Tom Olaisen and the Boys & Girls Club.



In addition to supporting baseball, GCI is involved with the USA Wrestling program.

GCI Hits a Home Run for Kids

by Rebecca Carter

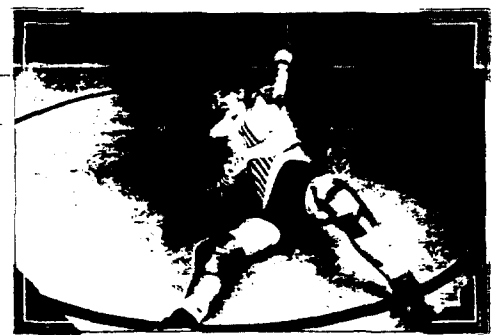
Al Gerlach, president of GCI, is North Dakota State Commissioner for Babe Ruth Baseball. His company is committed to supporting this program for youngsters. "It's a program to keep kids playing baseball instead of doing some of the other things they could do," Gerlach said. "We've got a lot of kids that play in the program and I just feel it's really beneficial to them because if they stay in sports they don't usually get into anything else. They play three times a week, and they have some practices, so it really keeps them busy."

The Babe Ruth program is wide open with no discriminatory boundaries. "There never have been in the years I've been with it," Gerlach said. "It was one of the very first sports programs to admit girls on an equal basis with boys."

Gerlach has been involved with many aspects of the program.

"I've coached and I've been on the local board of directors. I've been local league president, local commissioner, district commissioner, and now state commissioner," Gerlach said. "So I guess I've done about everything you can do at the local level."

Company Vice President Keith Kerbaugh is also active in the community, although his specialty is wrestling. Kerbaugh currently is on the North Dakota board of directors for the USA Wrestling program. "Every year Fargo hosts the world's largest wrestling tournament. In an ordinary year 2,000 kids wrestle in the tournament," Kerbaugh said, "but 1996 is not an ordinary year. Because Atlanta is hosting the Summer Olympics, where a second wrestling tournament is normally held, USA Wrestling is combining both national tournaments and



holding them in Fargo. That means 3,600 wrestlers will be in the city for eight days." This requires a massive coordinating effort. Kerbaugh, a former college wrestler and coach, whose son is an All-American wrestler on a college scholarship, manages volunteers on the floor at the tournament.

Both men take time to support their favorite sports, and are therefore a positive influence on a lot of kids all across the country.

GCI owns and manages 1,000 payphones and is an aggregator for AT&T.

The Pinkus Baby

by Rebecca Carter

This is a story of a most unusual payphone connection. And theft. And generosity.

Six weeks after Brittany Pinkus was born her skin turned yellow. It was the beginning of a nightmare for the tiny child and her parents. She had a rare liver ailment and needed a transplant within a year or she would not survive. Hospitalizations became frequent. Her home came to look like a hospital, with medical equipment everywhere — even in the refrigerator. Her condition means she does not produce enough blood, so she has daily transfusions. At the time of this writing, she had had more than 100 transfusions. Insurance paid for much of the cost, up to a point. Brittany's 30-year-old parents have already paid more than \$8,000 for her care.

One of Brittany's uncles, who has five children of his own, volunteered to give a portion of his liver. The transplant spared her life for a short while, but then failed. Brittany is back on the list of people waiting for a donated liver. This time, for ethical reasons, Brittany's doctors insist it cannot come from a live donor. Brittany's medical costs have mounted to more than \$1 million, and her parents expect to be in debt for the rest of their lives.

Payphone Connection

The baby's great grandmother, Maxine Pinkus, wanted to help with some of the expenses, so she bought a new Protel payphone and had her son Bob install it in front of her grandson's office. The phone began producing a small income, a little something to help with the child's medical bills. Then, after only two months, the phone was stolen. All that was left behind was an

enclosure with Brittany's name inscribed in the base.

Bob Pinkus, Brittany's great uncle, is a small independent public payphone (IPP) provider with 10 phones. In desperation he wrote a letter to the California Payphone Association (CPA) asking if anyone could donate a phone or a board to replace the one that had been stolen. He hopes eventually to install several more phones for Brittany.



Generous Response

A quick donation came from Dan Hansen, who is president of Advanced Payphone Services and is a California Payphone Association board member. Hansen could empathize with the Pinkus family from several perspectives, because he has had a number of his phones stolen, and he and his wife have a new baby as well. Now the donated phone is in place, and it is producing a little money to help pay for Brittany's ever-mounting bills as she waits for the liver transplant, which is all that can save her life.

You can contribute to:
Trust Fund for Brittany Pinkus
P.O. Box 10059, Dept. 272
Newport Beach, CA 92658

If you wish to help by donating phone
equipment, please call Bob Pinkus at
(714) 990-1635.

Everyone Lends a Helping Hand at 4-M Communications by Rebecca Carter

Respect for individuals permeates the corporate culture at 4-M Communications, an IPP provider based in Traverse City, Mich. The company is owned by Mike Miller, who is a board member of the American Public Communications Council Inc. Robin Rosier, account representative and director of customer service for 4-M, described some of the ways the company's philosophy encourages its employees.

"Mike's philosophy is that all people have talents and values and he likes to see them use those talents," Rosier said. "He feels people are happy when they pursue personal goals. The company encourages employees to get involved in activities that are meaningful to them. If that means taking an hour or two every week to attend a class or meeting, other employees cover and the person taking the time off makes it up during lunch, on weekends, or whenever they can fit it in."

Corporate Time Trade

Receptionist Vanie Hendges takes a class every semester at Northwestern Michigan College. If she can't take it at night, she attends during the day. Most

recently she scored a 4.0 on her term paper for a psychology class on verbal abuse of women. She proudly shared her triumph with others at the company, where the subject opened a few eyes and encouraged some lively discussion.

Kids Call Home Free

Many of 4-M Communications' payphones are in impoverished rural areas where the local exchange carrier (LEC) doesn't provide public telecommunications service. Schools often bus children as far as 40 miles. This means that many of them live outside the local calling area. Sometimes a call home to tell mom or dad the basketball game is almost over can cost several dollars. 4-M Communications helps these families by establishing each student's home phone number as a free call from school payphones.

Several of 4-M's employees praised Miller for the work atmosphere he has created. They talked about how everyone pulls together as a team, pitching in to help each other as well as reaching out to the community. With that kind of caring environment at work, what employee would not want to give as much as possible?

Pop Bottles for Love

Victor Pickard picks up used pop bottles and cans from 4-M Communications. Though not an employee, people working there admire and appreciate this determined man. After suffering a stroke, he became paralyzed on one side. Not letting this stop him, he started volunteering for the Alzheimer's Society. In 1994, he raised \$13,000, one dime at a time, by returning the cans and bottles to stores for the 10-cent return value. While other volunteers raise thousands through corporate donations, Pickard slowly and laboriously makes his rounds every day, using what he has to help others. His contribution was third highest among volunteers for the local chapter of the organization.

▶
Victor Pickard raised \$13,000 for the Alzheimer's Society — one dime at a time.



▶
Sally poses with Katie, the golden retriever she received from Paws with a Cause.

Paws with a Cause

Nancy Templeton, administrative assistant at 4-M, is president elect of Quota Club International Traverse City, a service organization for professionals and management. Her group has donated six "hearing" dogs to Paws with a Cause, a group that provides dogs to the hearing impaired. The dogs act as their owners' ears, telling them when the phone is ringing, the baby is crying, or someone is knocking on the door. The

dogs assist in many aspects of their owners' everyday lives. Each dog costs \$5,000 to \$6,000.

Templeton, an avid animal lover with two hearing impaired cousins, finds this project especially meaningful. "I think it's just wonderful that these dogs can be so highly trained to do so much for their people," she said.

In addition to Templeton's involvement, company employees support the group's annual Bowl-A-Thon and Christmas auction.

Payphone Network Aids Families in Need

by Rebecca Carter

Adopt-A-Family

Ray Odom of Phoenix has a holiday tradition of sponsoring a poor family through St. Vincent de Paul Society's Adopt-A-Family program. "This is a good way to give something back to the neighborhood where I have several profitable payphones," Odom said.

Last Christmas, other Arizona Payphone Association (APA) members joined with Odom to brighten the holidays for a family of nine who was living in a subsidized two bedroom apartment with concrete floors and almost no furniture. The father works hard as a gardener, but his labor barely supports the family. Association members contributed to provide food, clothes, blankets, books, toys, and other essentials. Members

gave time as well. "Our association goal was to raise \$1,000 to aid this family and to help with another program. Kid Street," Odom said. The

association actually raised \$1,850 to assist both causes.

Giving Kids a Place

Kid Street was designed for children in Westwood, which is Phoenix's highest crime area. The program provides the kids a place to play on Saturdays, because the city closes off one block from traffic. Volunteers supervise games of hockey, basketball, and volleyball. This is part of a program to help bring

the community together, restore pride, and reduce crime.

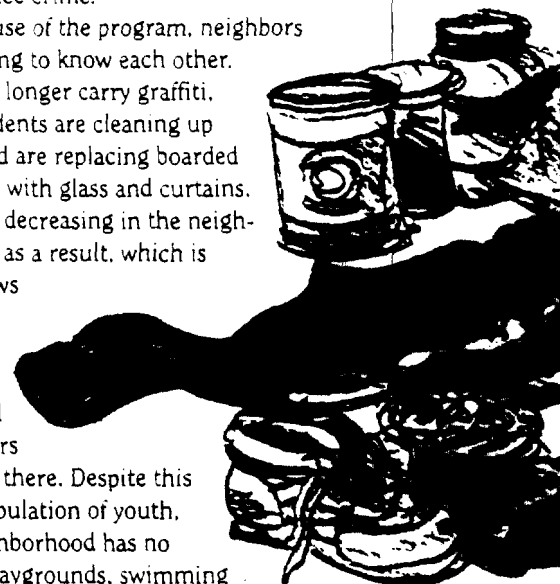
Because of the program, neighbors are getting to know each other. Walls no longer carry graffiti, and residents are cleaning up yards and are replacing boarded windows with glass and curtains. Crime is decreasing in the neighborhood as a result, which is good news for the 2,500 children and teen-agers who live there. Despite this large population of youth, the neighborhood has no parks, playgrounds, swimming pools, libraries, sports fields, or community centers. "The one-square mile area has a high payphone population," Odom said. "In working with the Westwood Association on Kid Street and helping provide a graffiti-free environment, we are assisting with the decrease in crime."

Toys, Too!

Odom, an avid motorcycle rider, is also active in his local Harley group's Toys for Tots, which solicits donations of money and toys during the Christmas season.

Odom owns Payphone Network of Arizona and has several other entrepreneurial ventures as well.

KIDS STREET



NuCoM Comes Through in a Pinch

by Rebecca Carter

Corren Chang, customer support and services manager for NuCoM, speaks with volumes of enthusiasm as she talks about her company's community service projects. "People are

in a generous mood during the December holiday

season."

Chang noted,

"so that is when

the company asks employees to bring in whatever they have to

give. Donations range from food to clothing

to household goods. NuCoM then

works with the Good Samaritan House, the Elks or Rotary International to distribute the contributions."

During last year's flooding in the

Castroville area, the company held an emergency collection, asking in particular for

items for babies. "Employees cleaned out garages, closets and kitchen cupboards," Chang said. "They brought three tightly packed pickup loads full of portable cribs, high chairs, walkers, furniture, food, clothes and blankets." These helped make up three semi truck loads that the Elks delivered to the disaster site.

NuCoM is currently gathering all of its older computers and putting them in proper working order for a Rotary International program. The club donates computers to schools in poor areas.

NuCoM also has its own program wherein it places payphones in unprofitable locations such as women's shelters, homes for the handicapped, rehabilitation centers and other sheltered environments. "Despite the fact that these payphones are not profitable, they are something NuCoM gives to the communities that support it," Chang said.

NuCoM is an IPP provider and an AT&T aggregator in California's Bay Area. The company's president, Tom Keane, is also president of the California Payphone Association and is a member of the board of directors of the American Public Communications Council.

Answering a Higher Call

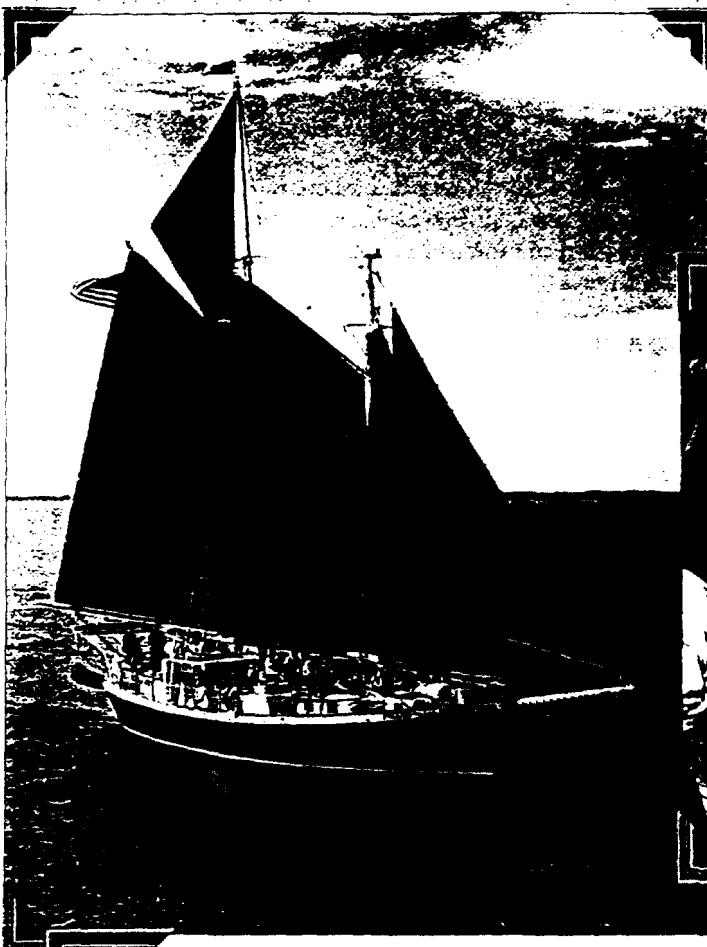
by Margo J. Hackel

After receiving a citation for multiple violations of compliance regulations on its single payphone, the Calvary Baptist Church in Manhattan turned to the Independent Payphone Association of New York (IPANY) for assistance. The Rev. Sal Balzano called IPANY's executive director, Lester Shafran, and asked for information about getting the church's old wall phone up to code.

Stephen Mottes, president of M&M Telecommunications Inc., came to the rescue when Shafran and IPANY President Dennis Novick put the word out for a volunteer. Talk about divine intervention. Mottes said he only spent a total of about an hour

and a half fixing up the phone, which included updating the out-of-date labels and upgrading the rate tables. "I gave them a new download on the board which controls the telephone," Mottes explained.

Now there should be no problem when the inspector from New York's Public Service Commission comes back to check the phone (which, by the way, is in the basement of the church). Mottes says he was glad to help out — after all, it didn't cost him anything but a couple of dollars for parking. "When called, I go," he shrugged. Spoken like a true savior.



◀ The Schooner Inland Seas provides environmental education for students.



▲ Executive Director Tom Kelly helps give kids a hands-on training experience.

From Sea to Shining Sea

by Rebecca Miller

Excitement and passion rise in his voice as Don DuBois talks about the time he spends volunteering for The Inland Seas Educational Association. The association, which is based in Traverse City, Mich., educates students on the importance of keeping water clean. Students come from all over the state to take boat tours of Lake Michigan. It's a real hands-on education — students actually take water and sediment samples. They are taught that all the tributaries in Michigan — the streams, creeks and rivers — empty into the Great Lakes.

The day also includes discussions about the hazards of dumping pollutants. Volunteers talk about the food chain, all the way from the tiniest plankton to humans, and talk with students about the history of the lake. "After chartering boats from the start, the program's popularity grew so rapidly that the association had its own 100-foot boat built for the 1995 season," DuBois said. "Now, in addition to our boat

(Inland Seas), during the 1996 season we will again be chartering another vessel or two to accommodate popular demand." Presently, members take groups of 45 to 50 students out for demonstrations twice daily throughout the ice-free months of May and June. Tours resume when school starts in the fall, and continue until the lakes freeze again. "Operating two or three boats, we can accommodate several hundred more students this season," DuBois said.

What part does DuBois play? "I help financially, of course, but also as a volunteer instructor on the boat." You can tell DuBois is grinning as he thinks about the thousands of children watching and learning about the Great Lakes ecosystem and the importance of keeping it clean and functioning naturally.

Don DuBois owns Manitou Associates, which operates 30 phones in the Traverse City area.

8-year-old Jacob Brandstetter, who has cerebral palsy, places a ring on the pole.

No Horsing Around

by Rebecca Carter

Jim DeArkland's passion is horses. His company is one of the largest sponsors of an association called Ahead With Horses, which helps handicapped children through therapeutic horseback riding. "The kids improve motor skills by learning to ride," DeArkland said. "Giving them the opportunity to connect individually with the horses is also an important aspect of the program." The program is so popular that it has attracted support from prominent people like former President Ronald Reagan, who was the keynote speaker at a fund-raising event in 1993.

Jim DeArkland is president of Southern California Payphone in the Los Angeles area. He has served on the board of directors of the California Payphone Association for many years.

For Katherine, the pain is gone, and it is replaced by joy, happiness and victory.

You can see the excitement in Shan Cifarelli's face as he meets (or beats) the challenge of standing on a moving horse!

2-year-old Shivani Patel and 4-year-old Christopher Freeman perform doubles... for the first time ever.

DECREASE

THE

PIECE



INCREASE

THE

PEACE

IPANY

Independent Payphone Association of New York
and Goods For Guns Foundation Inc.

9 East 40th Street 13th Floor New York NY 10016

no incoming calls

IPANY Takes a Stand on Crime by Rebecca Carter

Last year, *Perspectives* covered two community service programs that are sponsored by the Independent Payphone Association of New York (IPANY). The association has expanded these programs and has added several others. Association President Dennis Novick was kind enough to give us an update.

One program, called Goods for Guns, involves a trade-off — a person brings in a gun in exchange for a \$100 gift certificate to a local store (typically sporting goods). The program has expanded nationwide, and its founder received honors from both Gov. Mario Cuomo and President Clinton.

IPANY made a major contribution to the program by paying to have 20,000 stickers printed. The stickers, which cost \$1 apiece, advertise the Goods for Guns program. IPANY members placed the stickers on their payphones.

IPANY members also distributed 1,000 canisters to stores, restaurants and other payphone locations. The canisters, which were labeled "Change for Change," provided a convenient way for shoppers to contribute while they had a few extra coins in hand. Each time an IPP provider made a collection from a phone, he also collected the money from the canister. IPANY gathered all the donations and then sent a check to the Goods for Guns Foundation. The association raised several hundred dollars this way.

Basketball for Youngsters

Another way IPANY helps its city is by sponsoring more than a dozen basketball teams for inner city youth. The association paid tournament fees and printed T-shirts for players in targeted areas all over New

York. This helped the kids and provided additional exposure for the Goods for Guns program.

Novick credits the combined efforts of Police Commissioner William J. Bratton, Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, and this program for helping reduce many categories of crime, especially violent crime, by more than 40 percent in just the last two years.

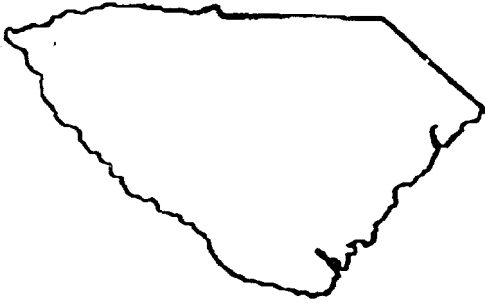
A New SPIN for Police

IPANY is also assisting the police force through its SPIN program — special police identification number. IPANY members have programmed their phones so that police officers may dial their local precincts at no cost. This service is available at all 31,000 payphones in New York City that belong to IPANY members. IPP providers forego commissions and several operator service providers (OSPs) make the service available at no charge to participating payphone companies. Police officers use the number frequently and are grateful for the service. Police Commissioner Bratton has commended IPANY for this service.

Operation Drug Stop

IPANY and the New York Police Department (NYPD) are also working together on another important program: Operation Drug Stop. When police believe a certain phone is being used for illegal activities such as drug dealing, they notify IPANY. The association calls the owner, who takes steps to relieve the problem — measures such as blocking incoming calls and changing the phone to pulse dialing. IPANY is now working on a similar program with the New York Housing Police, a federally funded task force charged with reducing crime in public housing projects.

Rebecca Carter edited On The Line magazine for the California Payphone Association for five years. She is now a freelancer based in Olympia, Wash.



1993 A.P.C.C. Industry Achievement Award Winner

South Carolina Public Communications Association

1132 South Center Road

Darlington, South Carolina 29532

(803) 393-1843

(803) 393-5588 Fax

SOUTH CAROLINA PAY PHONE OWNERS DONATE PHONES TO HURRICANE VICTIMS

Contact: Clifton Craig (803) 393-1843

DARLINGTON -- The president of the South Carolina Public Communications Association announced today in the wake of Hurricane Fran, private pay phone owners in the state will provide emergency pay phone service to hurricane shelters.

Clifton Craig, an owner of Carolina Payphone Systems and the president of the association, said, "We understand the great need for communications during an emergency such as this. People who have been displaced from their homes need to contact their families. We want to make sure they have a way to do that."

The more than 100 members of the association will provide pay phones to shelters throughout the state. The association is hoping to work quickly with the Local Exchange Companies to install these much-needed phone lines.

The phones will be installed at no cost. Any profits made from these phones will be donated to Relief Agencies to aid victims of Hurricane Fran. Callers will be charged only \$1.00 for a four minute call anywhere in the continental United States.

The association has established a toll free number, 1-800-686-FRAN (3726), for emergency workers to call to request a pay telephone installation at their shelter.

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HIGH COUNTRY ROUNDUP



Vol. 11 No. 6

STILL FREE!

September 22, 1992

GTE yanks pay phones

On Friday, Sept. 10th, pay-phones thru-out the Chama Valley were removed without warning, in what appeared to be a punitive, retaliatory action because local business owners had signed a contract with Cherokee Communications of Santa Fe for additional pay phones. The move also caught Cherokee off-base, and installation of the new service, slated for Monday the 14th, may have been held up while they replace equipment and lines.

The only notification that GTE gave its customers concerning the abrupt phone removals was a casual remark made by Gil Martinez, local GTE supervisor as he filled his gas tank, nobody else had any advance notification. Removal of the phones followed required notification to GTE from Cherokee, and included pads, phones, booths or pedestals and existing lines. GTE's only justification of such stripping was that all existing equipment belonged to GTE and probably liability problems. No transfer or sales of equipment was discussed between GTE and Cherokee.

According to Henry Ramariz, GTE state manager, pay-phone locations are supposed to generate \$125 a month in revenues, and if a

proposed site cannot pay for itself, the company will not authorize a phone there. GTT has lost about 1/4 of the pay-phone business in the Valley recently to Cherokee, and next year, equal access will/could cause even more problems, when residential phone users can choose their service company.

At least 8 businesses were caught in the squabble between the giants, leaving many tourists stranded without a way to "call home". Margaritas, in T.A.; Twin Rivers R.V. park; El Meson Motel; Eddies Chevron; Branding Iron and High Country Lounge. One was also removed in Dulce, location unknown, and the Y motel also lost its pay-phone.

Art Rivera had the pay-phone in the lounge at the High Country removed without notice because he contracted for an outside phone at the 7-11; justification from Mr. Ramirez was that the inside phone would no longer generate adequate revenues per month. This phone was removed without warning shortly after local manager Gil Martinez and independent contractor Mike Sandoval finished lunch in the restaurant, but no mention was made regarding pay phone removal.

New pay phones in Valley

John Heney of Cherokee Communications said that new pay phones that were yanked out by GTE, would be installed by Sept 16th. The company, which has offices in Santa Fe and Albuquerque employs technicians from all over the state, including Farmington and Santa Fe, but said that the phones that Cherokee uses are "smart phones", and are on 24-hour computer printout, monitored at all times. If there should be a problem, computer alert employees to the malfunction and repair should be on the way.

In regards to the stripping of phone facilities

by GTE, Heney said that it is not a normal practice for GTE to go as far as had been done here in the Valley, and he blamed an over-zealous supervisor for the problem.

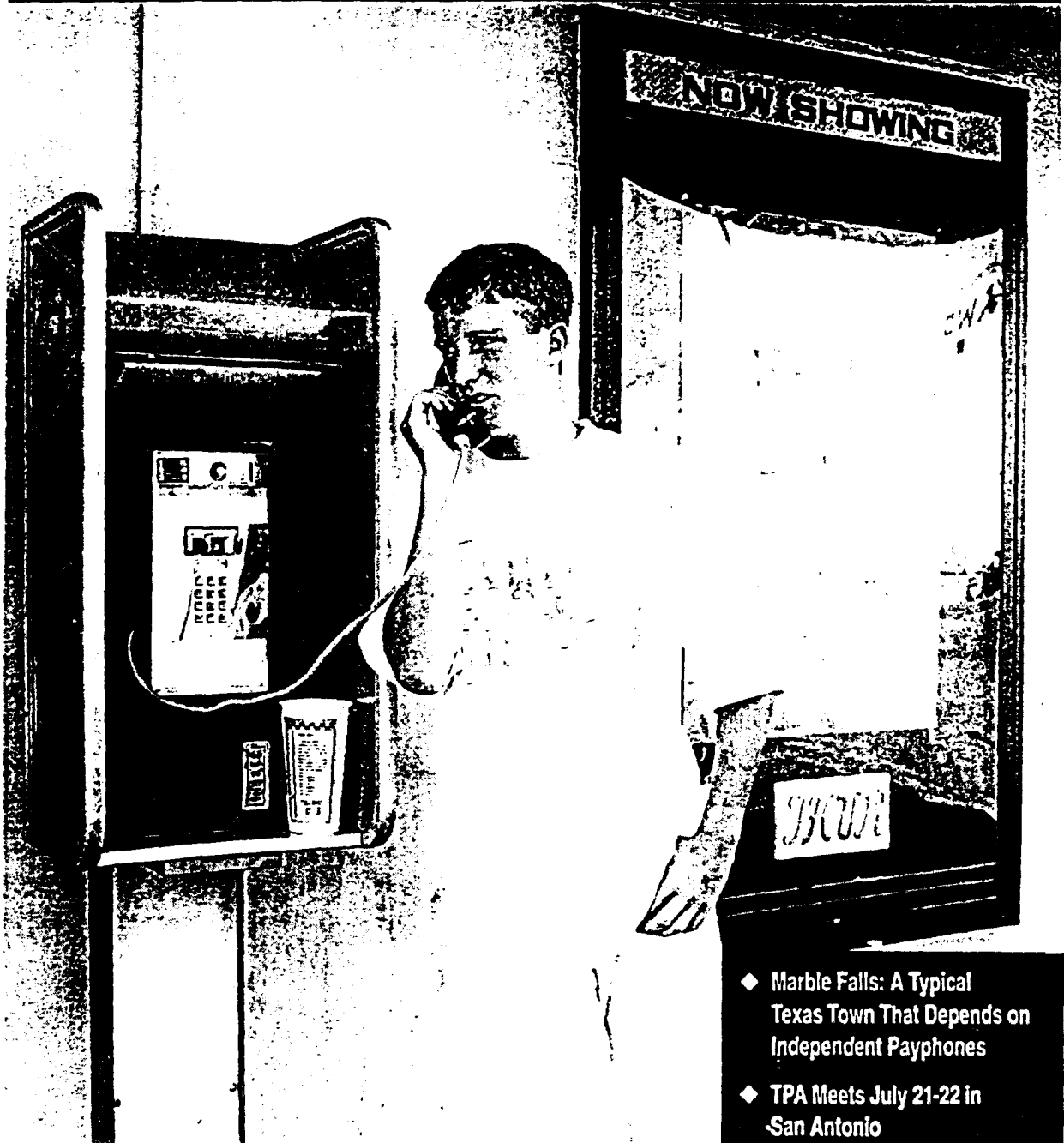
Heney also stated that Cherokee does not have a minimum amount (GTE \$125) per month requirement that the phones must make in revenue. He also said that Cherokee was delighted to be doing business in the Chama Valley and looks forward to both increased business and a visit soon to our area.

Information regarding pay phones is available at 983-4144 or 888-2086.

TEXAS CALLING

Texas Payphone Association

July 1994



- ◆ Marble Falls: A Typical Texas Town That Depends on Independent Payphones
- ◆ TPA Meets July 21-22 in San Antonio

MARBLE FALLS

CITY LIMIT

POP 4007

A Typical Texas Town Served by the Independent Payphone Industry

Every year approximately 300,000 people visit the Bluebonnet Cafe in Marble Falls, Texas to enjoy their home-style cooking: chicken fried steak, fried catfish, fried okra, homemade rolls and pies, and more. While the Bluebonnet is the most popular place to eat in the small town, GTE said it had to remove the cafe's payphone because it wasn't generating enough revenue for the telephone company.

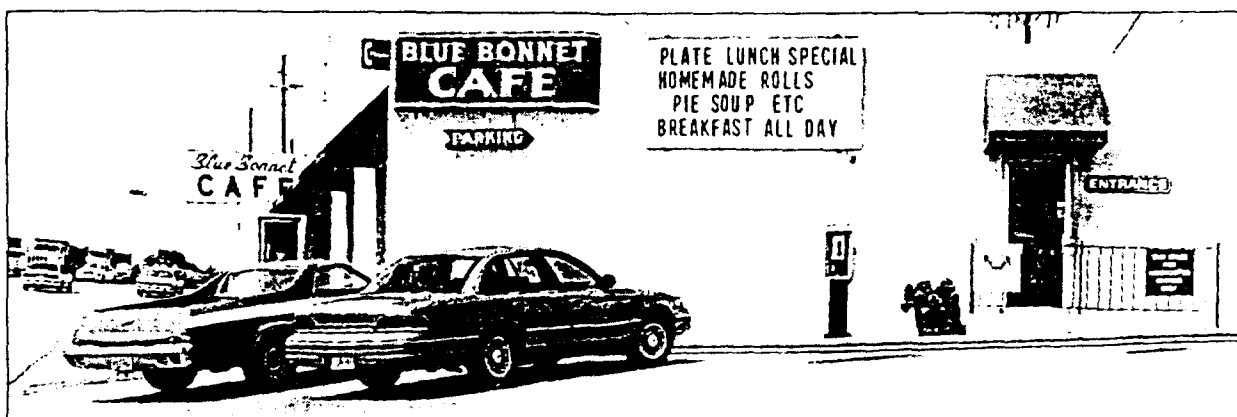
That's when Bluebonnet owner John Kemper turned to an independent payphone company to install a payphone outside the front door of the 65-year-old cafe. "I felt like my customers needed the service, and I didn't want to have to pay for a payphone. This was a good alternative," he said.

Kemper is President of the Marble Falls/Lake LBJ Chamber of Commerce, and he supports entrepreneurship and business development. He said having an independent payphone "is a better deal for me—they pay for the phone and pay me a commission" for having the phone on the premises.

Marble Falls is a typical Texas town where the local telephone company is removing its payphones and refusing to install pay telephones at no charge in new locations. About 75 percent of the payphones in Marble Falls are owned by independent payphone

companies. TPA conducted a general survey along the city's main streets to count payphones and determine ownership, and then reported the results to the local chamber of commerce. "I'm surprised that the majority of the payphones are independently owned. I would have guessed that GTE had them all or the highest percentage," said Donna Klaeger, Executive Director of the Chamber of Commerce. "I do appreciate the contribution that these independent payphone companies are making to the local economy and providing this service to the community." She hopes independent companies will install even more payphones in the area—and especially in the popular park areas along Lake Marble Falls where GTE would not install pay telephones.

Payphone Sales and Service owns the only payphone on Main Street in Marble Falls, which is outside the Marble Theatre. Owner Harry Crawford said there never had been a payphone at the community's only local theatre until he installed one. "The closest payphone used to be two or three blocks away, and it was a real safety hazard for kids to cross several streets to use a phone," Crawford said. GTE had refused to install a payphone at the Marble Theatre, and the owner did not like to let children



use her business phone. Now the owner and the movie-goers appreciate having a payphone available. "That phone handles a lot of local collect calls, because the kids spend all their money on popcorn and candy and they don't have any money left to call home," Crawford said.

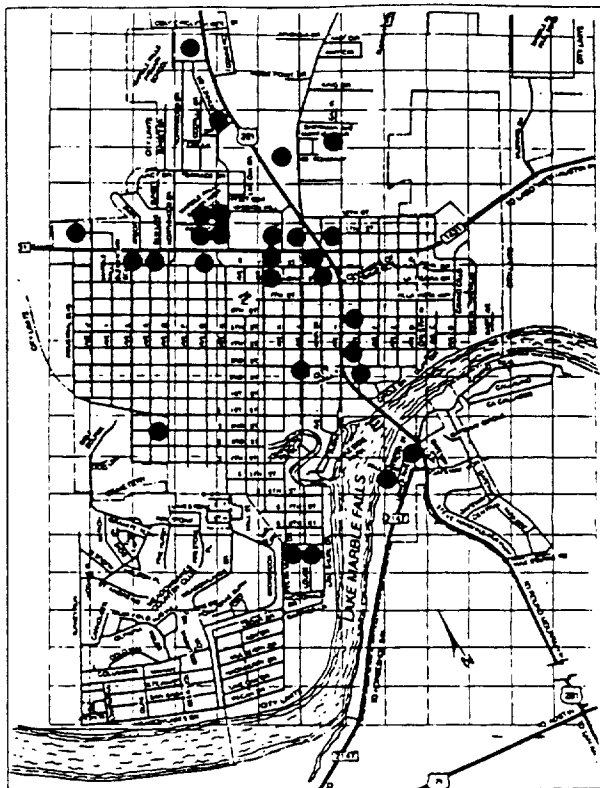
Crawford said he and his wife Lola travel to Austin regularly, where Lola's mom and their son live. That's how they happened to drive through Marble Falls, where they took the time to talk to people to see if they might need payphones. "We develop a lot of new markets, and a majority of our phones are placed in locations where there was not a payphone before," he said.

The Crawfords discovered that one unmet need in Marble Falls was for payphones at apartment complexes—and especially those where many people have limited incomes. Payphone Sales and Service owns payphones at five apartment complexes in Marble Falls, and most of the phones are in the laundry rooms at the complexes. They are proud to be providing phones so people can stay in touch with their family, friends, and workplaces. "We have to make money on what we are doing, but we also have to look at the community we are serving and what they need."

Crawford can describe off the top of his head the location of each of his 13 payphones in the Marble Falls city limits. "Payphones are kind of like your kids—you keep track of them," he said with a laugh.

The largest bank of payphones in Marble Falls is at the HEB food store, where three payphones owned by North American InTeleCom are located in the entry foyer. "The usage of those three phones is almost continual, and 75 percent of the calls made are local calls," said Carol Vance, NAI's Director of Operations. She said NAI also provides a payphone at HEB in the employees' break room. "HEB wants to have a payphone just for employees in every store as a special courtesy so their staff doesn't have to stand in line with the public to make calls," she added. Employees use the payphone before and after their shifts and on breaks.

Vance said NAI has been associated with HEB since 1985, "so everywhere they go we go." That association allows NAI to provide an important ser-



The dots indicate locations of all the independent payphones within the city limits of Marble Falls. vice to grocery shoppers and HEB employees throughout Central and South Texas.

Harold Taylor of T&T Communications was the first independent payphone owner to introduce 25 cent per minute coin long distance calling in Marble Falls. Taylor started offering it three months ago, and he said many people are finding it's convenient to pay with quarters and is the cheapest way to call long distance.

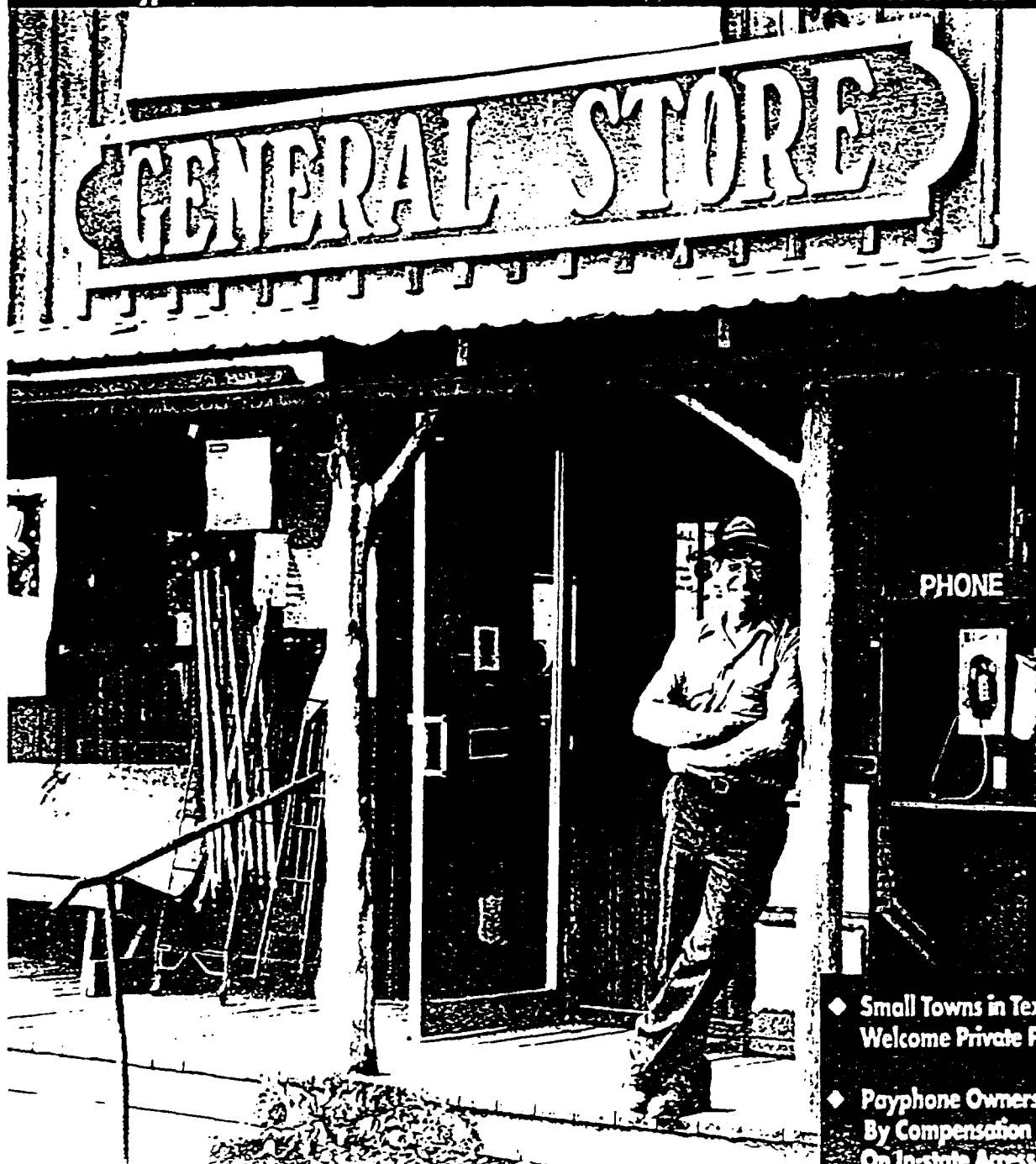
T&T has payphones in Marble Falls at several locations where GTE pulled their payphones, as well as at convenience stores and gasoline stations whose owners asked GTE to remove their pay telephones because they preferred to have T&T phones.

Marble Falls attracts people from throughout the U.S. who enjoy the Highland Lakes and recreational activities. At the River View RV Park on the banks of Lake Marble Falls, there are typically 30 vehicle spaces filled every day. The only phone the visitors have to use is an independent payphone located in the laundry room at the RV park. "About 80 percent of them are retired couples, and they depend on the payphone to call their kids and grandkids," said Manager John Wefler. The RV travelers regularly stand in line at the park's payphone which is both a lifeline and a "loveline" for them.

TEXAS CALLING

Texas Payphone Association

October 1992



- ◆ Small Towns in Texas Welcome Private Payphones
- ◆ Payphone Owners Are Hurt By Compensation Inequities On In-state Area Code Calls

Private Payphones Benefit Callers In Small Towns Throughout Texas

Residents of Lytton Springs regularly drop by Spradling's Store to pick up a Big Red or some tortillas or just to talk. The 80-year-old general store is the central gathering place for the small town and the site of the only payphone in the community.

Owner Les Spradling said most of the people who use his payphone are local residents who don't have a phone in their homes. "We're not real affluent out here, and a lot of people are living on the edge," he said. Many people live in mobile homes throughout the grassy ranchland in Central Texas. The population of Lytton Springs is 150, but many



Les Spradling

more people live in the outlying countryside. TPA-member company T&T Communications installed the payphone at Spradling's Store two-and-a-half years ago, and today their red payphone provides the town's communication lifeline.

Residents without phones in their homes use the payphone for calling needs, whether to call doctors or their offices in Austin or San Marcos or to keep in touch with relatives. "In the evenings after Spradling's Store closes, there are always people talking on the payphone. Sometimes they sit in their cars waiting in line to make a call," said Jerry Cardwell, herdsman for the U-Bar Hereford Ranch. Cardwell sometimes drives up on his tractor to use the phone. "The payphone is right next to the diesel fuel tank I use for my tractor, so it's convenient to fill up and make a call," he said.

This spring when area creeks rose over their banks, many residents used the Spradling's payphone to call their families and say they couldn't make it home. During floods, stranded motorists sleep with friends in Lytton Springs or at Spradling's Store.

Spradling's has the ambiance of an old-time country store: it has the original wooden floors, a wood stove, jars of pickles by the cash register, and

all the basic food staples. A quilt hangs from the ceiling to be raffled to benefit the local fire department. To keep up with modern times, the general store also sells lottery tickets and rents videotapes.

Harold Taylor, president of T&T Communications, said he feels good about meeting the needs of callers in small Texas towns. "Almost all of our payphones are in small towns because I am a country boy myself and I just like travelling through the country," he said. Taylor travels to Spradling's Store twice a month to visit with Les and to check on the payphone and perform routine maintenance.

Taylor started his payphone business three years ago when he retired from the Army and from real estate and was looking for a hobby. "I bought four phones to start with, and they were so much fun I just kept growing," he added. Harold's wife, Kathleen, is the comptroller and secretary. Their son, Gregory, is vice president and operations manager, and granddaughter Amy is the treasurer. Harold and Kathleen have an office in their home, which is on top of a hill near Center Point. All of their payphones are in the Central and South Texas area.

While Harold Taylor is 71 years old now, he doesn't think he'll ever retire from the payphone business. "It keeps your mind and your body active all the time," he said, pointing out that they travel 100,000 miles per year visiting clients, checking on payphones, and always looking for new locations. He said he enjoys having his wife as a business partner. "For years and years my wife worked one place and I worked somewhere else, but now we are together all the time."

"We love this business," Kathleen added. When she retired as front desk manager at Inn of the Hills in Kerrville, she was eager to learn all about payphones. "I have always liked the telephone business," she said. "For the first 15 years we were married, I worked as an operator for several telephone companies."

While travelling around Central Texas, the Taylors ventured down FM 1854 and ran across Spradling's Store. "I talked to Les about installing one of our payphones, and he was glad I did. Everyone seems to appreciate the fact that we are putting a payphone in their small town," Harold Taylor said.